

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 039528
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P 150134Z EEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 039528

FOR MATLOCK FROM GARRISON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

1. I HAVE AND MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR LETTER OF FEBRUARY 5, WHICH CROSSED WITH MINE OF YESTERDAY. I WILL WRITE FURTHER AFTER TALKING TO THE AMBASSADOR, WHO WILL BE IN FOR CONSULTATIONS NEXT WEEK. FORMAL ACTION WILL PROBABLY BE TAKEN SOON, BUT MEANWHILE I HAVE NO PROBLEM IN YOUR QUIETLY LETTING YOUR SENIOR COLLEAGUES KNOW. RATIONALE FOR CHANGE IS IN TERMS OF NEED TO HAVE FULL BACKGROUND ON CURRENT ISSUES, BUT I WOULD THINK IT BETTER TO AVOID THE ISSUE IF POSSIBLE. MENTION SHOULD BE MADE THAT ANOTHER GOOD JOB IS ENVISAGED.

2. FOR TRACY RE HOLIDAY ON ICE RUBLE CONVERSIONS: JIM WILKINSON MET TODAY WITH A/BF/FC AND CU/ARTS; BURKE OF MADISON SQUARE GARDEN WILL CALL ON DEPARTMENT THURSDAY
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PAGE 02 STATE 039528

FEB 16. IMMEDIATE PROBLEM SEEMS TO BE SORTING OUT DISPOSITION OF 1977 RUBLES. IF ASSUME: (A) DELAY IN RE-OPENING OF NONCONVERTIBLE ACCOUNT AND (B) WASHINGTON PERMISSION TO DISBURSE DIRECTLY, CAN EMBASSY USE UP THE 1977 RUBLES FOR MOSCOW EXPENSES SUCH AS LOCAL EMPLOYEE PAYROLL? IF SO, WOULD IT BE WISE FOR US TO TELL BURKE THAT WE EXPECT A REASONABLE SOLUTION TO THE 1977 RUBLES, BUT CAN

MAKE NO COMMITMENTS TO 1978 AND BEYOND? AS YOU KNOW, IN LONGER TERM THERE ARE SOME PROGRAMMATIC ARGUMENTS THAT

ANY SUCH CONVERSION SERVICE WHICH MIGHT BE AVAILABLE
WOULD BE BETTER USED FOR OTHER GROUPS OR PURPOSES.
FINALLY, WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED CONGRESSIONAL PHONE
INQUIRY ASKING WHY WE DON'T APPLY HIGHER LEVEL POLITICAL
PRESSURE TO OBTAIN RUBLE ACCOUNT FOR 1977 RECEIPT CON-
VERSIONS. WE SAID TIMING WAS NOT YET RIGHT TO ESCALATE--
DO YOU HAVE COMMENT ON THIS ASPECT?

3. DEFENSE DEPARTMENT (ISA) IS ASKING IF WE CAN
RECOMMEND GOOD SOVIET SPECIALIST, PREFERABLY WITH SOME
POL/MIL BACKGROUND, FOR DETAIL TO THEM. THIS WAS RAISED
WITH MARSHALL, AND IS OBVIOUSLY OUTSIDE THE ROUTINE
DETAILS TO DOD. WE THINK IT A GOOD IDEA AND WOULD WELCOME
ANY NAMES YOU MIGHT SUGGEST. MID TO SENIOR LEVEL.

4. TOLYA WAS IN TODAY, COVERED THE USUAL RUN OF SUBJECTS
AND WE HOPE TO GET REPORT TO YOU TOMORROW.

5. AS BILL MENTIONED TO YOU, WE ARE SLOGGING AWAY ON A
POLICY PAPER ON NATIONALITIES. WE MAY GO INTO FINAL
THIS WEEK OR NEXT. VANCE

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